

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Original) Counterweight, connectable to a washing machine tub (2), comprising an hollow shell (3) of U-shaped cross-section for containing a concrete ballast mass (4) poured therein, characterized in that said shell (3) is integrally provided in one piece with at least a foldable member (5) adapted to close at least a portion of said shell (4) in order to encapsulate said concrete ballast mass (4).
2. (Original) Counterweight according to claim 1, characterized in that said foldable member (5) comprise a cover extending from a peripheral edge (8) of said shell (3) in correspondence to enlarged lower portions (6) thereof said peripheral edge (8) integrally provides pivotal sections (9) adapted to facilitate the rotation of said foldable member (5) around the peripheral edge (8) so that the ballast mass contained in the enlarged lower portion (6) are covered by said foldable member (5).
3. (Original) Counterweight according to claim 2, characterized in that said foldable member (5) has a peripheral edge comprising a clamping rim (10) adapted to engage a corresponding edge of said shell (3) to close the enlarged lower portion (6) and encapsulate the ballast mass (4).
4. (New) Counterweight according to claim 1, wherein a peripheral edge (8) of said shell (3) integrally provides pivotal sections (9) adapted to facilitate the rotation of the foldable member (5) around the peripheral edge (8).